



Arizona Department of Public Safety

For Immediate Release

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Arizona Department of Public Safety GIITEM Announces Sentences Handed Down for Two Men Convicted of Human Trafficking and Kidnapping

This case was one of the first illegal immigration investigations conducted by the DPS IIMPACT squad after receiving training from ICE under section 287g of the Immigration and Naturalization Act

Two of the three human smuggling suspects arrested in a raid of an illegal immigrant drop house in West Phoenix have been sentenced. The arrests occurred at 4522 W. Earll in Phoenix on September 19, 2007 by members of the Arizona Department of Public Safety's Illegal Immigration Prevention and Apprehension Co-op Team (IIMPACT).

The three suspects, all Mexican Nationals, were arrested and charged with Human Smuggling and Kidnapping for holding 18 people, 15 males and 3 females, against their will and demanding additional smuggling fees for their release. The kidnapping victims were also Mexican Nationals. The smugglers were part of a large scale rip-off crew which specialized in home invasions of rival smuggler's drop houses. These rip-off crews would break into the drop houses and take the people inside, holding them for additional ransom from family members in Mexico.

The two smugglers who were sentenced in Maricopa County Superior Court were:

Luis Alberto Ochoa-Miranda	5 years in State Prison
Marlen Gracia	3 years in State Prison

The third suspect, Cosme Rodrigo Bernal-Espinoza, is in custody awaiting trial.

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